A Realistic Novel by the Author of "Moon and Sixpence"

"Mrs. Craddock"

Early Book by W. Somerset Maugham a Searching Satire on Sex

NOW, hard upon the wide stir which W. Somerset Maugham caused with his "Moon and Sixpence," Doran & Co. are bringing out an American edition of an earlier novel, "Mrs. Craddock." In that later novel of the bizarre fulfillment of genius there was something a little automatic, something in its arrogant and flaunting realism that was a little pat—a subversiveness that took life by the short cut as much as sentimentality does. But in this earlier novel there is a real sobriety. There is in it a sense of the fluent quality of life—the sense of the mystery of existence and human passion that an artist can only achieve in humility.

"Mrs. Craddock" is wrought with a restraint of feeling and craftsmanship that Maugham has not shown either in "Of Human Bondage" or "The Moon and Sixpence." The restraint is in the very color of the novel, in the bleakness of the Kentish landscape and the economy of physical experience that go to make up the story. But it portrays, nevertheless, a rich and imagination-stirring figure in Bertha Ley. She is the last flaring of the embers of a dying county family—a woman passionate and subtle and intelligent, on whom life encompasses again the treachery of sex. The characteristic acrid irony of Maugham is not absent from "Mrs. Craddock." He lays on Edward Craddock, the clod whom Bertha married in mad infatuation, a heavy hand. His picture of county society is a malignant caricature. But his insight into Bertha's mind, the psychology of her passion, is magnificent. She herself, contemplating her husband's insensate coldness, the incongruity of their mating, marvels at the forces that threw them together. "She had withdrawn from the pomps and vanities of life to live as her ancestors had lived—plowing the land, sowing and reaping; but her children, the sons of the future, would belong to a new stock, stronger and fairer than the old. The Leys had gone down into the darkness of death and her children would bear another name.

"All these things are gathered out of the brown fields and the gray sea mist. She was a little tired and the physical sensation caused a mental fatigue, so that she felt in her suddenly the weariness of a family that had lived too long. . . . Her thoughts wandered to her father, the dilettant who wandered through Italy in search of beautiful things and emotions which his native country could not give him; of Miss Ley, whose attitude toward life was a shrug of the shoulders and a wellbred smile of contempt. Was not she, the last of them, wise? Feeling herself too weak to stand alone, she had taken a mate whose will and vitality would be a pillar of strength to her defailance; her husband had still in his sinews the might of his mother, the earth, a barbaric power which knew not the subtleties of weakness." . . .

Whether "Mrs. Craddock" is satire or tragedy it is a little hard to know, Mr. Maugham points the story so finely between. Perhaps it is both. Certainly, there is satire in the contrast between her agonized vision of her husband's death and her grateful acceptance of it in a scene that is almost a realization of her premonition. And there is a bitter irony, too, in the defrauding experience of her second love affair. But the frustration of a high and ardent temperament, the waste of a capacity for heroic abandonment, is perhaps a more subtle catastrophe than the ancients knew who first defined tragedy.

Neurotic, highly-pitched, subtle and mordant, "Mrs. Craddock" is an extraordinary example of the modern literary quest into sex.

Book Gossip

An Employee of Senator Harding

WARREN G. HARDING, the Republican nominee for President, was one of the early employers of Frederick O'Brien, author of "White Shadows in the South Seas," when Mr. O'Brien was tramping about the world and Mr. and Mrs. Harding were running a small paper in Marion, Ohio. Mr. O'Brien was on his way back across the country after having marched on Washington as a "General" in Coxey's army. He stepped out of a side-door sleeper somewhere in Ohio and first began selling hedges to the farmers. A murder trial in Marion attracted his attention, and he offered himself as a great crime reporter to Mr. Harding, proprietor of "The Star." Mr. O'Brien says that at that time Mr. Harding solicited advertising and Mrs. Harding kept the books and distributed papers to the newsboys.

Preface by D. H. Lawrence

Poetry lovers will be particularly interested in the preface "On the Nature of Poetry," which D. H. Lawrence contributes to his volume of "New Poems," published this week by B. W. Huebsch, Inc. Of free verse Mr. Lawrence says, in part: "Much has been written about free verse. But all that can be said, first and last, is that free verse is, or should be, direct utterance from the instant, whole man. It is the soul and the mind and body surging at once, nothing left out. They speak all together. There is some confusion, some discord. But the confusion and the discord only belong to the reality, as noise belongs to the plunge of water. It is no use inventing fancy laws for free verse, no use drawing a melodic line which all the feet must toe. Free verse toes no melodic line, no matter what drill sergeant. Whitman prunes away his cliches—perhaps his cliches of rhythm as well as of phrase. And this is about all we can do, deliberately, with free verse. To break the lovely form of metrical verse, and to dish up the fragments as a new substance, called vers libre, this is what most of the free-versifiers accomplish. They do not know that free verse has its own nature, that it is neither star nor pearl, but instantaneous like plasm. The utterance is like a spasm, naked contact with all influences at once. It does not want to get anywhere. It just takes place."

Iron and the Fatherland

A schooner bound for Hamburg, carrying nickel, a metal essential to the manufacture of heavy calibre guns, purchased by Krupp from a French firm, was seized in the Channel by a French warship in September, 1914; it was taken to Brest and released, by an order of the French Ministry, to continue on its voyage. This is one of the facts recently brought to light in the French Chamber of Deputies, carefully verified and recorded by Clarence Streit, in "Where Iron Is, There Is the Fatherland," to be issued this week by B. W. Huebsch, Inc. Bit by bit in the French hearing, according to Mr. Streit's book, the sordid story of the treason of certain of the big business men of France and Germany in time of a most acute war emergency leaked out. Undoubtedly collusion on the part of the enemy owners of iron and coal is revealed by Mr. Streit throughout this book, which bids fair to prove one of the most sensational of all post-war revelations.

The Aldus Book Company

The Aldus Book Company, which, due to the absence of Mr. Travers S. Browne for service in the British army in 1916 was discontinued at that time, has resumed business at 89 Lexington Avenue, New York City, a neighborhood steadily growing as a book mart. They will continue their old line of rare book and first editions.

Lord Charnwood's Lincoln

The demand for "Abraham Lincoln," by Lord Charnwood, steadily increases, and the publishers, Henry Holt & Co., announce that they have ordered the tenth printing of this remarkable book. The great merit of Charnwood's book is the manner in which the author has drawn Lincoln's achievements so skillfully and correctly against not merely a national background, but a world background—he shows clearly Abraham Lincoln's place in the history of democracy. Charnwood's "Abraham Lincoln" has been adopted as a standard work by the public schools of Lincoln's own state. The tenth printing, according to the publishers, will be the largest printing that has been made since the book was first published in this country.

ROBERT HAVEN SCHAUFFLER, author of "Fiddler's Luck," published by Houghton Mifflin Company

In the Bolshevik Bastile

Russian Officer Describes Series of Startling Adventures Under Red Regime

EARLY in 1918 Colonel Andrew Kalpaschnikoff, a Russian officer in the service of the American Red Cross, was imprisoned for several months by order of the Bolshevik government in the famous fortress of Sts. Peter and Paul in Petrograd. His account of his experiences, entitled "A Prisoner of Trotzky's" (Doubleday-Page), is a most vivid and startling narrative. It possesses all the fascination of fiction. It is doubtful if any hero of Dumas ever passed through so many harrowing adventures or enjoyed so many narrow escapes from death.

Kalpaschnikoff was accused of plotting to send a number of Red Cross motor cars to General Kaledine, an anti-Bolshevik Cossack leader who was then fighting in the Don region. Kalpaschnikoff vehemently asserts his innocence and is supported by former Ambassador Francis, who writes a foreword to the book. Mr. Francis says of the author:

"He is a patriotic Russian, possessed of courage, intelligence and culture. If Kalpaschnikoff was connected with any movement for the restoration of the monarchy I was not aware of it, and think I should have known it if he had been, as I had several talks with him on the subject. He always expressed himself as a liberal-minded Russian and regretful that the provisional government had been overthrown."

Colonel Kalpaschnikoff's attachment to the provisional government seems to have been a case of preferring the lesser of two evils. He inveighs bitterly against its head, Kerensky, whom he describes as a shallow adventurer without principle, courage or honor. He declares, on somewhat doubtful authority, that Kerensky "had been arrested several times before the revolution, not only for political, but for criminal offenses."

It was a strange crowd that filled the cells of Sts. Peter and Paul during the period of Kalpaschnikoff's imprisonment. Old monarchists and veteran revolutionists, united in hostility to the Bolsheviki, occupied adjoining cells. Among the more distinguished prisoners were Bourteff, the Sherlock Holmes of the revolutionists, who devoted many years of his life to the exposure of spies and informers; Purishkevitch, a fanatical Czarist; Mme. Virubova, a confidante of the Czarina and a friend of Rasputin, and Terestchenko, a minister in Kerensky's cabinets. There was much in the situation to suggest the French Revolution, although none of Kalpaschnikoff's acquaintances was carried off to execution. The prisoners lived in a state of constant terror, however, as there was always danger that the turbulent Red guards might break in and commit a wholesale massacre. The author describes the Kronstadt sailors who acted as his jailers in a philosophical, not to say charitable, spirit.

"It is curious to say, but these rabid Bolsheviki, with whose assistance Lenine succeeded in taking power into his hands and who were often described as bloodthirsty and violent brutes, always seemed to me to be—when I came to know them better—brave, energetic and bright fellows, with open minds, and they were quite well educated for common Russian peasants. I am perfectly sure that if they were properly handled and reasonably talked to they would turn out to be kind-hearted individuals, would understand their mistakes and would have made wonderful material in the hands of a clever, strong-willed man. Some of them were simply idealists, and it was impossible to bribe them with money."

Colonel Kalpaschnikoff describes an interview between himself and the Pole Derzhinsky, the leading spirit in the formidable Extraordinary Commission, which may be likened to the Committee of Public Safety in the French Revolution. To the author's question why he did not go back to Poland and leave Russia alone Derzhinsky is represented as replying:

"Your question interests me and I will answer you precisely. Poles like me—small oppressed employees—are the best workmen for Bolshevism and we volunteered to organize it in your country first, and then later, when the Allies have been stupid enough to supply Poland with money and everything she needs, we can swallow the country in a week, it is such a wonderful field for our propaganda."

If the author's recollection serves him correctly, Derzhinsky must be given credit for abnormal clairvoyance. He was speaking in April, 1918, not in April, 1920. And at that time the political horizon certainly did not indicate a speedy resurrection of Poland under Allied auspices.

Colonel Kalpaschnikoff's release was as melodramatic as his imprisonment. He had languished in the fortress for several months; every one seemed to have forgotten about his case. But he had one faithful and devoted adherent, his cook, Daria. One day, as Daria was washing her master's white Spitz dog, the Bolshevik Commissar Uritzky called up to ask her to give some testimony about a certain young officer who was accused of robbery. Daria replied by denouncing Uritzky for the loss of some shoes which had been stolen from her at the time of Kalpaschnikoff's arrest. Uritzky finally had Daria brought to his office. There, as Kalpaschnikoff tells the story, she greeted him with the tactful observation:

"You look like a good Barin (gentleman). You do not look wicked at all, and, now that I have seen you, I really do not understand why people are not ashamed to call you a filthy old Jew ready to strangle every one."

Uritzky was quite overpowered by this brilliant stroke of diplomacy, and Daria followed up her advantage so effectually that the Commissar issued orders for Kalpaschnikoff's release. His troubles were by no means over, and it was only after a considerable display of ingenuity that he was able to escape through the German and Bolshevist lines and take refuge in America.

Colonel Kalpaschnikoff's book ends on a note of optimism: he sees hope for Russia in the growing strength of the Red army and in the concentration of the Russian national energies upon a holy crusade against the Poles, whom he accuses of destroying several Greek Orthodox churches. He believes that the revival of religion and patriotism will soon lead Russia out of the temporary disastrous interlude of Bolshevism.

Books Received

War

A SERVICE OF LOVE IN WAR TIME. By Rufus M. Jones. Published by the Macmillan Company, New York.

An account of the relief work undertaken by American Friends in Europe.

LADIES OF GRECOURT. By Ruth Gaines. Published by E. P. Dutton & Co., New York.

The story of the work of the Smith College Relief Unit in the devastated districts of the Somme.

Public Affairs

WHAT HAPPENED TO EUROPE. By Frank A. Vanderlip. Published by the Macmillan Company, New York.

A new edition of Mr. Vanderlip's much discussed work. In his preface for the new edition the author says:

"A peace treaty was written that took into account pretty much everything except economic factors. But economic factors have to be reckoned with. It is idle to take into account ethnological considerations or political differences, if the people within the new political boundaries are cold, unclad and hungry."

Miscellaneous

SHORT TALKS ON PSYCHOLOGY. By Professor Charles Gray Shaw. Published by Brentano's, New York.

Popular and practical lessons from the science of psychology.

OCCASIONAL PAPERS AND ADDRESSES OF AN AMERICAN LAWYER. By Henry W. Taft. Published by the Macmillan Company, New York.

A collection of especially significant public statements by a distinguished member of the New York bar.

A Book for 'Cello Lovers

Robert Haven Schauffler's Story of an Amateur Musician

ON THE second page of Robert Haven Schauffler's "Fiddler's Luck" (Houghton Mifflin) we found a reference to "a long strip of printed paper which, when pasted under the strings, promised a short cut to mastery by pointing out exactly where to put each finger." Out of a rather inglorious musical past came the recollection of a similar strip of paper which we had purchased from a mail order house and glued ungracefully to the neck of a genuine Strad (Brooklyn, 1904 A. D.). A few minutes after our début as a back-parlor Kreisler we were persuaded by a none-too-proud family to devote our tuneful talents to the less uncertain reaches of the household piano, but the memory of our short career as a self-taught fiddler remains. And so we discovered in Robert Haven Schauffler, erstwhile captain in the A. E. F. and amateur 'cello virtuoso extraordinary, one with whom we sympathized forthwith and one who, we fancy, would have sympathized with us in the days of the Brooklyn Strad.

Therefore, seeker after literary guidance, expect no valid criticism of "Fiddler's Luck" from this reviewer. It is a book written by a gifted musical amateur for his fellows—the chronicle of a man and his way with 'cellos. It is a lovable tribute to the bond of harmony that exists between those who indulge in Beethoven orgies and Brahms saturnalias. And all of it sounds modestly autobiographic except the little strain of romance which sings through the volume as a faintly sentimental violin obbligato to a 'cello solo.

To confirmed 'cello-haters: Although you may scoff at amateur Schauffler's devotion to his "dog houses" you will enjoy the interludes giocoso which punctuate "Fiddler's Luck." As, for instance, the story of Colonel X.

"It was no other than Colonel X who once broke up a rehearsal of his regimental band by waving his arms in an impressive manner and roaring:

"'Here, what're you trying to do?'

"Leader. 'We are rehearsing "The Stars and Stripes Forever," sir.'

"Colonel X (leveling a minatory finger at the alto, tenor and bass trombones). 'I want to see those instruments dress up.'"